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CRESTVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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FEBRUARY 2020

EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday, February 3: Brentwood Elementary School Welcome Walk at 9 am. For info, call 512-414-2039.

Tuesday, February 4: Austin Independent School District Meeting. 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at the Brentwood Elementary School Cafeteria, 6700 Arroyo Seco. See article for more information.

Monday, February 10: Crestview Neighborhood Association Meeting. 7:00 pm at the Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow St. Agenda: Vote on CNA contribution to Notoberfest and discussion of issues of interest to the community. Discussion and possible action on requesting that Arroyo Seco be designated a "no mow zone" by the city of Austin during wildflower season.

Tuesday, February 11 – Friday, February 14: Special Called Council Meetings for 2nd of three readings for CodeNEXT, Austin's revised land development code. Location: City Hall Council Chambers at 301 W 2nd Street or you can watch live on http://www.austintexas.gov/page/watch-atxn-live. Feb. 11 from 9 am – 3 pm, Feb. 12 from 3 pm – 7 pm, Feb. 13 from 9 am – 1 pm & 2 pm – 6 pm, Feb. 14 from 9 am to 5 pm

Tueday, February 18: Trial date set to hear a lawsuit over Austin's land development code and property owners' right to protest.

Tueday, March 3: Election Day!

Saturday, March 7: Friends of Brentwood Park Spring Work Day – see article.

Saturday, March 7: Sunshine Gardens Spring Plant Sale from 9 am to 2 pm at 4814 Sunshine Dr.

The Next CodeNEXT: Latest Developments

By Barbara McArthur, Austin Neighborhoods Council and Brentwood NA V-P

The first reading of the new Land Development Code (CodeNEXT V4) passed on a 7-4 vote with amendments with Council Members Pool, Tovo, Alter and Kitchen voting against. State law allows you to file a petition with the City of Austin in opposition to any zoning change to your property or property within 200 feet of your own. Council Member Pool introduced an amendment to the council to recognize those rights. The amendment failed on a vote of 4-7 with Council Members Alter, Kitchen, and Tovo voting to recognize protest rights for our citizens. To file your protest rights you can go to fileyourprotest.com.

The current schedule of CodeNEXT is that new maps and text will be released on January 31st. Currently second reading is planned for the week of February 14th.

Some of the amendments passed by the city council include:

- **More and larger transition zones and "missing middle" housing in existing neighborhoods.** The city council directed staff to map additional transition zones around parks, schools, grocery stores, Imagine Austin Centers, and mobility-bond-funded improvements. They directed staff to rezone corner lots to missing middle.
- **Increased impervious cover and increased building size (floor area ratio) in residential neighborhoods.** For homes that are at least 15 years old in any proposed residential zoning category, the city council recommended allowing re-subdivision with no minimum lots size and no parking required and increased impervious cover and floor area ratio (building size) for additional units built.
- **The allowance of some commercial uses in any residential zoning.** The city council introduced rules to allow small grocery stores in all residential zoning classes with a conditional use permit. They also want interior neighborhood commercial spaces with "basic amenities" such as but not limited to daycares, pharmacies, neighborhood groceries, restaurants, and civic spaces to be rezoned within the residential areas.
- **The city council recommended changing the Heritage Tree Ordinance to make it an administrative process (no public hearing) to remove heritage trees on corridors.** Additionally, the shorter front setbacks in both the transition zones and in the R2B zoning (proposed single family) targets the area where most people have front yard trees for redevelopment that would cause tree removal.

AISD Evaluating Parent Recommendations for Brentwood Elementary Relocation Swing Site

By Brentwood United Group

The Brentwood United parents committee met with AISD on January 17th. Several Brentwood teachers and staff members also attended the meeting. AISD presented the results of their Brentwood swing test fit efforts at the different locations previously proposed by the committee. In summary, AISD has determined that along with Dobie, the Brentwood/Brentwood Park and the Webb MS locations meet their stated physical criteria for a swing space. However, they are still evaluating the cost and schedule for both options. Neither of these options would require any grades to be "split off".

See Brentwood Elementary, continued on page 3

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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

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CNA General Meetings are held the second Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at the Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow St.
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Un-Still Life

by Marilyn Querejazu

Still life painting has always involved more trickery than stillness, with the result balancing somewhere between reality and illusion. This art genre is much more than bowls of apples and vases of flowers. In antiquity, still life paintings decorated the walls of wealthy patrons, and like ornate mosaics and sumptuous carpets, their purpose was to display beauty and opulence. They were the original trompe l'oeil, so realistic that guests reached out for a taste of painted fruit or a glass of two-dimensional wine. Generally, still life painting is purely decorative, there is no moral lesson, no mythological heroes – just a collection of everyday objects made beautiful through a painter's eyes.

There is nothing simple about still life painting. Objects are carefully selected for their shape, size, color, texture and significance. Light and shadow are controlled and maximized. Over history still life paintings have included an incredible assortment of things, not just fruits and flowers, but dead animals, beautiful pottery and china, half eaten meals, knives and guns, cheese, musical instruments and other works of art – anything meaningful to the artist or patron. Still life artists strive to capture the essence of light as it echoes from object to object through glass and liquid and across a surface.

In the age of digital photography, it is amazing that a still life painting is still arresting. You stop, you look, you point and smile. And although you can experience beautiful still life paintings online, there is nothing like the real thing.

Scott Kiche, an artist showing at Austin's Wally Workman Gallery, elegantly captures translucent light. See a preview here (www.wallyworkmangallery.com/scott-kiche.html). Check out excellent examples of still life art created by MaryBeth Karaus and James Andrew Smith (www.wallyworkmangallery.com/artists.html).

Still Life with Oranges, Jars and Boxes of Sweets by Luis Meléndez

Search the collections of art museums to find still life art painted over the ages. For example, *Still Life with Oranges, Jars and Boxes of Sweets* by Spanish Painter Luis Meléndez (1760-65) at www.kimbellart.org/collection/ap-198513 on view at the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth. Note the imperfections on the fruit, the veins of the leaves and the gouges in the wooden table.

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the San Antonio Museum of Art also include fine still life paintings in their collections. *Banquet Still Life with Roses* by Abraham Van Beyeren (1665) at the San Antonio Museum of Art is an abundance of flora, fauna and man-made objects, all reflecting light and casting shadows. Note the peeled orange, the near translucent grapes and the shimmering tablecloth. https://www.samuseum.org/

The more you see, the more you understand the endurance of still life painting.

Just down the road a bit:

As part of the yearlong celebration of Beethoven's 250th birthday, Austin Chamber Music Center presents **Beethoven and the Infinite** at the First Unitarian Universalist Church, 4700 Grover, Saturday, March 28th at 7:30pm. See more events at www.austinchmbermusic.org.

In Their Own Form, University of Texas Galleries. From Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Photography, this exhibition of emerging artists combines science fiction, Afrocentrism, fantasy, technology and non-Western mythologies. *In Their Own Form* is featured across the Art Galleries at Black Studies' two exhibition spaces - the Christian-Green Gallery and the Idea Lab. www.galleriesatut.org/intheirownform (through May 5)

And finally!! **CatVideoFest 2020** February 29, 2020 at 2:00 pm. Austin Film Society Cinema, 6406 N I-35 Suite 3100 Austin, TX 78752. A mash up of the latest and best cat videos from unique submissions and sourced animations, music videos and the internet. CatVideoFest will make you laugh and raise money for cats in need.

Brentwood Elementary, continued from page 1

The Brentwood/Brentwood Park option would keep kids on-site by placing temporary portables in the park and using the existing 100 wing classrooms (current kindergarten and 1st grade) and gym. The 100 wing would be remodeled at the end of the project, after the new portions of the building are completed. The Webb MS option (at 601 E. St. Johns Avenue) would add portables to the previous Webb Primary, and students would be housed in an all-portable school.

Other alternatives were ruled out or pushed lower on the priority list. Wooten Elementary and Park were eliminated as it was determined that if we are going to use a park it, should be Brentwood. Barrington Elementary was eliminated as they were promised that once Brown Elementary was completed, they would get their school back, and Webb is closer. The option to use Burnet Middle School is going to be followed up with an alternate test to see if that would work, but this is a lower priority/less promising option as all or most existing portables are in use.

AISD is evaluating the cost and timing impacts of each option and will share their recommendation at a community meeting on Tuesday, February 4, 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the Brentwood cafeteria, 6700 Arroyo Seco. AISD has said a final decision will be communicated February 7th.

There is much work to be done in a short amount of time. We welcome your comments and contributions to identifying, prioritizing, and acting on next steps. Anyone in the Brentwood community is encouraged to reach out to us and AISD with questions and comments so we can help with open communication and ensure voices are heard. For more information or to provide comments, please join our Facebook Group, "Brentwood United" or email us at unitedbrentwood@gmail.com. Or contact AISD at aisdcommunications@austinisd.org

The Machine

by Nancy Harris, CNA Treasurer

The machine came roaring off the back of the truck like some great yellow-orange prehistoric beast with a long neck and a single giant fang. It immediately began to pound the earth with its tusk biting off chunks of concrete. For several hours the gnashing of the brute's prong reverberated through the otherwise serene surroundings until it was encircled by a landscape of broken hunks of foundation.

The next morning the enormous tooth had been extracted and replaced with a bucket-like head with a solitary row of razor sharp teeth. The creature began to rake the ground with its maw, pulling dirt and debris into a jagged fortification or a craggy nest that it climbed atop to commandeer the territory it had claimed. From here the monster set about using its giant muzzle to rummage through the wreckage as if searching for some concealed, overlooked treasure, butting objects aside and chewing into the ground. As if this were the bounty the beast sought, a small man scampered dangerously close to the quickly oscillating head and menacing jaws grasping bits of rebar as they materialized and tossing them a short distance away in an attempt to keep the colossus from grabbing them for itself.

In Memoriam

Tim Ramirez, a Crestview Neighborhood Association member since its inception in 1982, passed away on January 1, 2020. Supporting the Association in many ways, Tim was always ready and willing to help out where there was a need, volunteering to distribute CNA newsletters for nearly four decades and serving several years as the Treasurer for the Association. He was also very involved with the St. Louis Catholic Church and served there in many roles. He will be long remembered and forever missed.

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Howdy Neighbor!

By Mike Lavigne, CNA President

The (formerly?) unseasonably warm temperatures and subsequent beautiful days have allowed me to run into even more of y'all outside as I've increased my bike riding around the hood. So many of us spend large amounts of time out in our front yards and in the street that it really drives home the fact that our neighborhood is facing irreperable harm. Our yards and streets are often defacto recreational areas. Whether it be tossing a ball, dunking on a 10 year old, doing rad kick-flips or just taking a walk, we rely on them, and they're one of the reasons we have such a tight-knit community.

This is, to me, one of the core reasons the new Land Development Code being rammed through by City Council is so dangerous to our community. Besides adding 30-50% more density across the neighborhood, it eliminates most of the parking requirements in the current code. I wish we all rode bikes or scooters or could afford to just Uber everywhere. I also wish no bad things happened and all movies were well written and worth my 12 bucks (I'm looking at you *Last Jedi*)...but it just isn't so.

The result is that a lot that currently has one unit and a driveway for one to two cars will be torn down and replaced by three to four units with NO DRIVEWAY. All of the cars are then moved to the street. Neighborhoods that are already like this don't have the same awesome front yard/ street hangs we get to enjoy. These hangs are how so many of us have met our neighbors and made lifelong friends. It is a legitimate quality of life issue. I've ridden through the North Loop neighborhood often enough to see the difference. And that ride isn't nearly as pleasant.

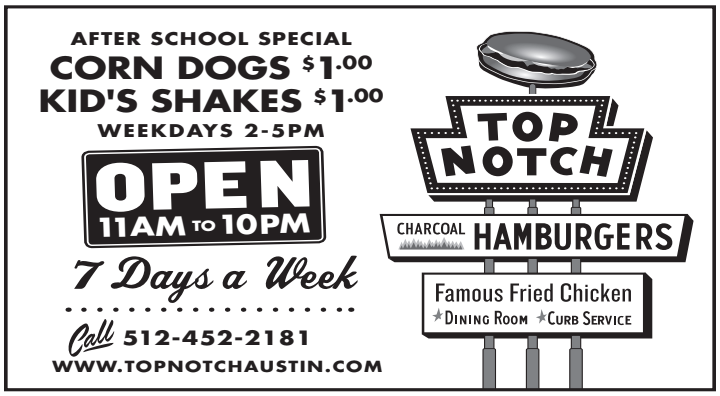
I realize that rad kick-flips and dunking on kids aren't and shouldn't be determining factors in city policy. But this is just one of a dozen ill-conceived and profit driven morsels the real estate investment community is licking their chops over in the new code proposal. Council largely still hasn't gotten the message that citizens who live here now should be considered in the new code. They refuse to implement incremental change over vast, massive upzoning across all neighborhoods (except the very wealthiest who can afford to sue to enforce deed restrictions, of course).

Change and growth in a capitalist environment are inevitable. But one of the reasons we have government at all is to protect citizens (neighborhoods) from massively capitalized industries (ie. institutional real estate investors). Zoning rules aren't all that different than environmental rules, food and drug safety regulations and traffic laws. They are meant to protect life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness- among other rights.

I'm an unabashed liberal. I've worked along side and for civil rights leaders from Reverend Jackson to Glenn Maxey. I can vouch with full confidence that the current changes to our neighborhoods will not do anything to address the actual causes of inequality and disparity. Instead they will only serve to push out those trying to hang on in favor of bringing in wealthier, whiter people.

Sunshine Gardens Annual Benefit Plant Sale

On Saturday, March 7th, from 9 am to 2 pm, you can fill your spring garden with organic and heirloom vegetable starts and herbs at Sunshine Community Gardens Plant Sale at 4814 Sunshine Dr. Choose from over 120 colorful varieties of tomatoes and 80 varieties of peppers, eggplants, and tomatillos. There is also a wide selection of herbs and ornamentals. Nourish those and the rest of your garden with some compost.



Calling All Park Lovers!

By Denman Netherland, Friends of Brentwood Park

Spring 2020 It's My Park Day (IMPD) is scheduled for Saturday, March 7th from 9am till noon. It is a great opportunity to be outside with your neighbors and give Brentwood Park some love. Projects suit many ages and abilities and include spreading mulch, clearing root collars, weeding flower beds, and maintaining the volleyball court.

IMPD is a city-wide service day organized each spring and fall by Austin Parks Foundation and Austin Parks and Recreation. Friends of Brentwood Park (FOBP) has organized these volunteer maintenance projects for IMPD at Brentwood Park each year since 2010.

Many thanks to Eldorado Cafe for tacos and Genuine Joe Coffeehouse for coffee.

Over the next month, FOBP will send out emails about this spring's IMPD with information about how to register and what to bring. (Online registration begins in February). Information will also be available through our Facebook page. If you would like to get involved with FOBP's leadership team or with park projects please let us know! We can be reached through our group email address: friendsofbrentwoodpark@gmail.com.

Free Income Tax Help Available

Foundation Communities will be providing free tax help for low-income families and individuals in Austin. Assistance will be provided until April 15 at the Prosper Center at 5900 Airport Blvd. For hours and days of operation, visit CommunityTaxCenters.org or call 211 for more information, to schedule an appointment and find out what to bring. The service is free for individuals and families who make less than $55,000 annually; income eligibility increases by $5,000 for each additional person for families with more than four members.

Protest the City's Proposed Zoning Change to Your Property

As you probably know, the City of Austin is hard at work on a plan to rezone every property in our community, with a final vote on the matter as early as March. Local officials want to let land developers pack up to 10 homes and buildings up to 45 feet tall on residential lots in the city's "transition zones," and they plan to allow a minimum of three large homes on virtually all lots outside those zones.

Texas law gives you the right to protest zoning changes affecting your property and properties near your residence. When you file a rezoning protest in connection with your property, the City of Austin cannot rezone your property under the proposed land development code without approval by three-fourths of the city council.

You can protect your home and nearby properties by filing an official rezoning protest online at https://fileyourprotest.com. It takes less than a minute for property owners to log on, fill out the electronic form, and submit it to city officials. The current deadline for protests is February 29, 2020. Or contact Chip Harris at 512-458-2488 to obtain a form that he will deliver to the city for you.

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